

REMARKS/ARGUMENT

Description of amendments

In the specification, the change suggested by the Examiner in the Office Action has been implemented.

Claims 26-61 are now pending and under examination. Applicant has added claims 26-61 and cancelled claims 1-25. No new matter has been added.

Claims 26, 43, and 48 are supported by the application as originally filed (see, for example, paragraph [0021], and the drawings and their description in the specification). The drawings, for example, show that a fitting is inserted into an opening in one of the front, upper and side walls of the support box. Other claims are supported by the cancelled claims.

Interview summary

Applicant's counsel greatly appreciates the courtesy extended by Examiners during the course of an interview conducted on October 27, 2003.

In the interview, Applicant's counsel and the Examiners discussed improvements to the claims.

Objection to the Specification

The change suggested by the Examiner in the Office Action has been implemented to overcome the objection to the specification.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103(a)

Claims 1-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §§102(b) and 103(a) as being unpatentable on the basis of several references. The cancellation of claims 1-25 renders the rejections of claims 1-25 moot.

New claims

For the following reasons, the new claims are patentable over the cited references.

Independent claims 26, 43, and 48 each recite a support box, which includes a base area, a front wall, an upper wall limiting a front leg room above, and side walls limiting the front leg room at the sides, wherein one of the front wall, upper wall, and side walls includes an opening. A fitting is inserted or insertable into the opening so as to cover the opening completely.

None of the cited references disclose inserting a fitting in an opening on the front wall, upper wall, and side walls of a support box. In fact, none of the cited references even discloses a support box, which includes a base area, a front wall, an upper wall limiting a front leg room above, and side walls limiting the front leg room at the sides.

Therefore, claims 26, 43, and 48, as well as the claims that depend from these independent claims, are patentable over the cited references.

The other independent claims (i.e. claims 38 and 57) also each recite patentable features not taught or suggested by the cited references. For example, each of these claims recites a vehicle device that is inserted or insertable an opening on the vehicle frame. Each of US 4,700,981 and US 3,606,446 teaches the insertion of a plug in a draining hole, while US 4,371,743 does not teach the insertion of anything in an opening on the vehicle frame.

Therefore, claims 38 and 57, as well as the claims that depend from these independent claims, are patentable over the cited references.

In light of the foregoing remarks, this application is considered to be in condition for allowance, and early passage of this case to issue is respectfully requested. If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the

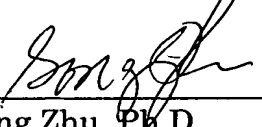
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application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (CAM #: 095309.50754US).

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Respectfully submitted,



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